

# Improving Parent Involvement in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Process

Using Indicator 8: Parent Involvement Survey results to improve district outcomes

DOE Special Education Programs  
May 2023

# Introduction

- ▶ This training is being recorded, so please encourage others in your district to contact me for the recording link.
- ▶ **Stacy Holzbauer**
  - ▶ [Stacy.Holzbauer@state.sd.us](mailto:Stacy.Holzbauer@state.sd.us)
  - ▶ Alternate Assessment Specialist with the Office of Special Education Programs
  - ▶ Indicator 8: Parent Involvement

# Training Agenda

- ▶ South Dakota Parent Survey – What it looks like
- ▶ Indicator 8: Parent Involvement – How to read district reports
- ▶ Parent Involvement – How to improve outcomes
- ▶ Response Rate – How to improve outcomes
- ▶ District Planning – How to implement

# South Dakota Parent Survey

## ▶ Current Process:

- ▶ In June/July, DOE provides printed surveys, envelopes, and the on-line survey link to all districts.
- ▶ Throughout the school year, districts distribute the surveys to parents of students in special education.
- ▶ Before April 30, districts should have distributed surveys to every parent.
- ▶ Before May 31, surveys must be completed online or mailed to the survey vendor.
- ▶ In September/October, survey results for each district are available. DOE posts results to SD-STARS.
- ▶ In September/October, DOE informs any districts who did not meet targets and asks them for a plan to improve outcomes.



Dear Parents/Guardians:

This is a survey for families with children receiving special education including speech language services. This is your opportunity to provide **CONFIDENTIAL** input to improve services and results for children and families in South Dakota. Your responses are extremely important to us. Please take the time to complete this brief survey and return it using the stamped, addressed envelope that is provided.

**\*\* NOW AVAILABLE!** If you would prefer to complete the survey online, please access using this link: <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/5697751/SDIE8>

<b>What is being asked?</b>	Information on your experience and family involvement with your child's special education services.
<b>Who is asking for this information?</b>	South Dakota Department of Education and the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs.
<b>Why am I being asked to complete this survey?</b>	To help guide efforts to improve services and results for children and families. The survey will be summarized for the state as a whole and broken out by individual school district. The summary information will be provided to each school district and also the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs in order to fulfill a federal requirement regarding parent feedback.
<b>How will my answers be kept anonymous?</b>	Your responses are completely anonymous. There is nothing on the forms that will identify you other than what district the survey is from. Questionnaires will be mailed to Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) for analysis. Only summary data concerning district-wide data will be shared with the district and South Dakota Department of Education.
<b>What do I need to do?</b>	Complete the enclosed survey, insert it in the addressed enveloped provided and drop it in the mail (no postage necessary) by May 31, 2022.

**If you have any questions, need an alternate format, or assistance completing the survey, contact:**

South Dakota Department of Education  
Special Education Programs  
605-773-3678

*Thank you for your participation,*

Special Education Programs Director  
Linda Turner

#### ***SOUTH DAKOTA PARENT INVOLVEMENT SURVEY – SPECIAL EDUCATION 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR***

This is a survey for families of children receiving special education services. Your response will help guide efforts to improve services and results for children and families. Please select one answer for each question. **Thank You!**

##### **A. My Child:**

###### **1. Grade during current school year (2021-2022)**

Pre-K   Kind   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   12

###### **2. PRIMARY Disability (Circle One)**

1 Autism	2 Deaf-Blindness	3 Deafness	4 Emotional Disturbance	5 Hearing Impairment	6 Cognitive Disability	7 Multiple Disabilities
8 Orthopedic Impairment	9 Other Health Impairment	10 Specific Learning Disability	11 Speech/Language Impairment	12 Traumatic Brain Injury	13 Visual Impairment including Blindness	14 Developmental Delay

###### **3. Ethnicity (Circle One)**

1 Hispanic or Latino   2 Not Hispanic or Latino

###### **4. Race (Circle all that apply)**

1 American Indian or Alaska Native	2 Asian	3 Black or African American	4 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	5 White	6 Two or more races
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Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

##### **B. My Participation:**

1. I am treated as an equal partner with my child's teachers and other professionals in planning his/her special education program.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am encouraged to participate in writing my child's IEP.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My child's school gives parents the help they may need to play an active role in their child's education.	1	2	3	4	5
4. My child's school makes sure that I understand the Procedural Safeguards (the rules that protect the rights of parents).	1	2	3	4	5
5. My child's school makes sure that I understand my options if I disagree with a decision of the school.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My child's school provides information on organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities.	1	2	3	4	5
7. For parents of students in grades 8 or above I have been involved in discussion with my child's school related to post-secondary school (college, technical or other setting), employment and/or independent living, and adult service agencies.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My child's teachers are available to me (in person, by phone, or via email).	1	2	3	4	5
9. My child's teachers communicate regularly with me about my child's progress on annual IEP goals.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My child's school carried out the current IEP as written and discussed.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Information I receive about my child's special education program is written in an understandable way.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Overall, I am satisfied with the extent to which teachers and other professionals encourage my involvement as a parent.	1	2	3	4	5

##### **Comments:**

If you would like to be more involved or more actively participate in your child's education, what could the school do to support you?

*If you have questions or would like more information about special education programs in your district or at the state level, please contact the South Dakota Department of Education (<http://doe.sd.gov>).*


My child's district name or code \_\_\_\_\_

# South Dakota Parent Survey

## PAPER VERSION

# South Dakota Parent Survey

**ON-LINE VERSION:** <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/5697751/SDi8> (English and Spanish) **due May 31, 2023**



**South Dakota**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Learning. Leadership. Service.

## South Dakota Parent Involvement Survey – Special Education 2022-2023 School Year

If you have more than one student with disabilities receiving special education services, please complete a survey for each child. After you've completed the survey for the first child, you will be given an opportunity to complete the survey on your other child(ren). Your feedback is VERY important.

2. What is your district? \*

-- Please Select --

3. What is your school? \*

Back

Next

40%

# Indicator 8: Parent Involvement

## District Results

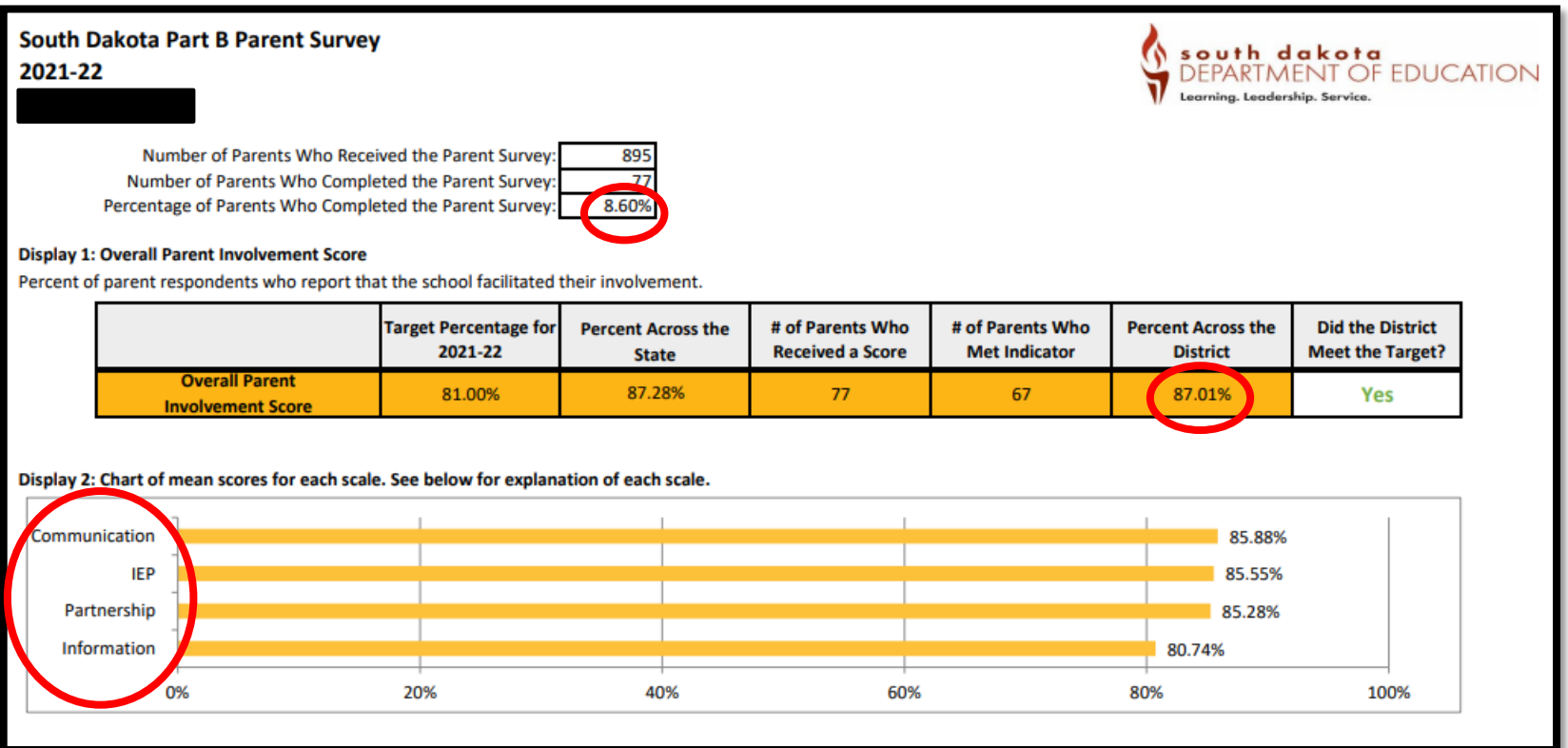
- ▶ In the fall, districts can view their previous school year results on their district Indicator 8 Report on SD-STARS/Special Education Community/Special Education Reporting PDF/Indicator 8.
- ▶ Results show scores for the two targets:
  1. **Parent Involvement Score** - Percent of parents who report that the school facilitated their involvement.
    - ▶ 2022-2023 Target: 81.50% - outlined on federal State Performance Plan (FFY2022)
  2. **Response Rate** - Percentage of parents who completed the parent survey (responded)
    - ▶ Target: 10.00% - set by DOE
- ▶ District results combine to create the data for the State Report. Then DOE must submit the data from the State Report into a State Performance Plan (SPP) to the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

# Indicator 8: Parent Involvement

## District Reports

First page of District Report shows the current scores for:

- ▶ Response Rate
- ▶ Parent Involvement
- ▶ Scores in Four Scales:
  - ▶ Communication
  - ▶ IEP
  - ▶ Partnership
  - ▶ Information





# Indicator 8: Parent Involvement

## District Reports

Further tables/graphs in District Report show:

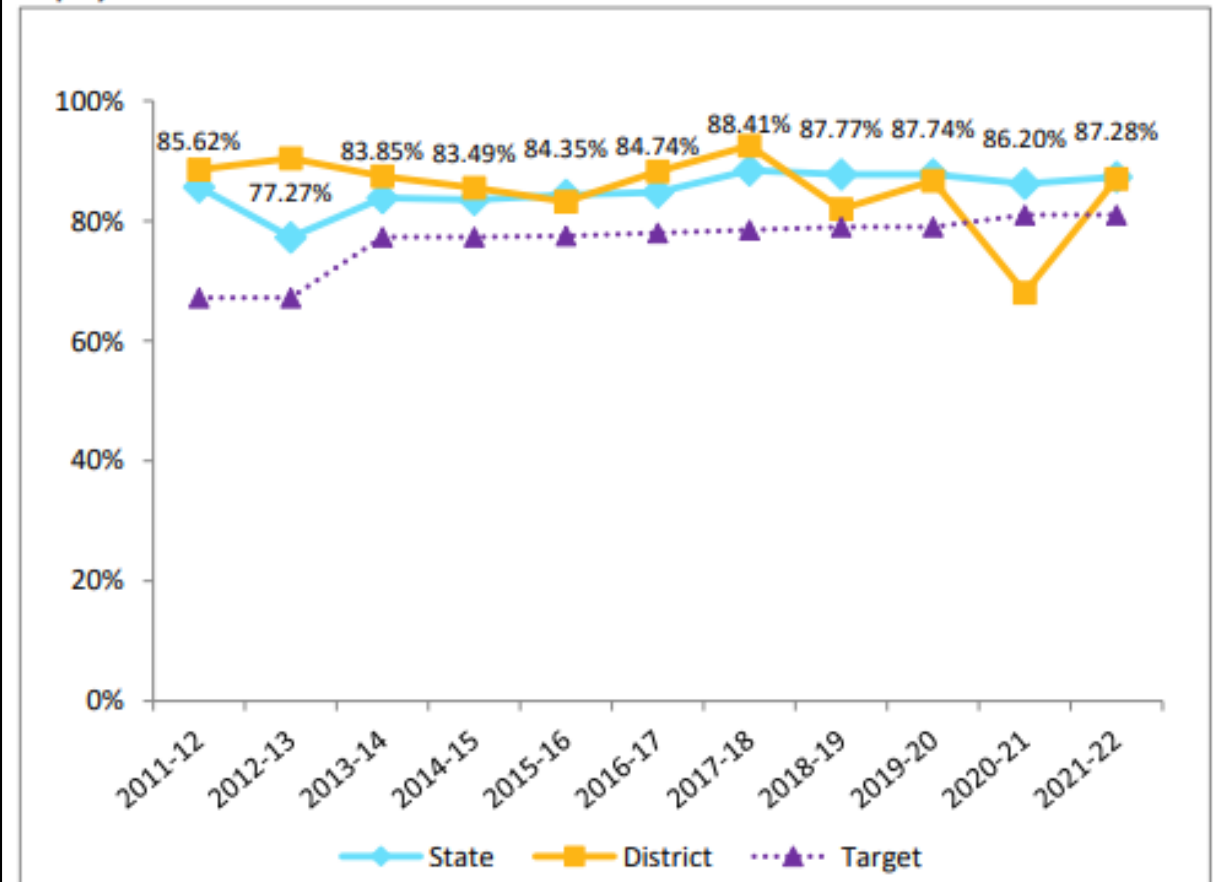
### ► Current Data:

- Scores on each survey question
- Scores of the four scales
- Response rates by demographics

### ► Comparisons Over Time:

- Scores on each survey question
- Parent Involvement Score
- Response Rate
- Scores of the four scales

Display 9: Overall Parent Involvement Score - Over Time



# Parent Involvement Results: How to improve outcomes

## Utilizing Parent Survey Results

- Individual scores on each survey question combine to create the Parent Involvement Score.

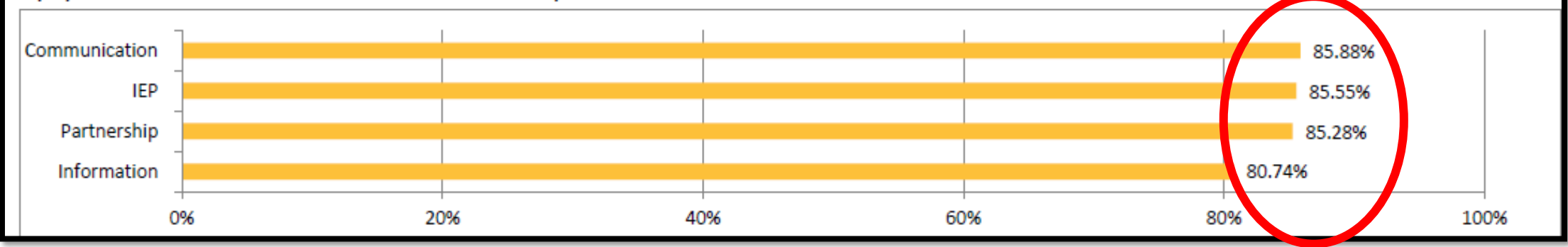
Display 3: Individual Item Results								
My Participation	# Answered	% Answered	Percent who said:					Agree, Strongly Agree
			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
1. I am treated as an equal partner with my child's teachers and other professionals in planning his/her special education program.	77	100.0%	4%	0%	1%	32%	62%	95%
2. I am encouraged to participate in writing my child's IEP.	77	100.0%	4%	3%	4%	30%	60%	90%
3. My child's school gives parents the help they may need to play an active role in their child's education.	77	100.0%	4%	4%	3%	35%	55%	90%
4. My child's school makes sure that I understand the Procedural Safeguards (the rules that protect the rights of parents).	77	100.0%	4%	1%	3%	36%	56%	92%
5. My child's school makes sure that I understand my options if I disagree with a decision of the school.	77	100.0%	4%	4%	5%	34%	53%	87%

# Parent Involvement Results: How to improve outcomes

## Utilizing Parent Survey Results

- ▶ The four scales, and the 12 questions included in the scales, outline best practices for parent involvement in the IEP process. The scales identify areas the district can celebrate, as well as areas to improve.
- ▶ For example, if the “Information” scale score is below target, the district should review the survey questions related to “Information,” and develop a plan to improve “Information” outcomes.

Display 2: Chart of mean scores for each scale. See below for explanation of each scale.



# Parent Involvement: How to improve outcomes

## Individual Education Plan (IEP)

### ▶ IEP: Does the IEP meeting address certain issues?

#### ▶ 2. I am encouraged to participate in writing my child's IEP.

- ▶ Meeting Notices: Ask parents what dates/times work for THEM for IEP meetings. Send meeting notices in a timely manner.
  - *Here are a few options. What works best for you?*
- ▶ Gather parent input PRIOR TO meetings (such as when you contact parents about the meeting date/time):
  - *Your input is valuable as we develop your child's IEP. What improvements have you noticed? What concerns should we address?*
- ▶ Gather parent input DURING meetings:
  - *What else should we be doing at school? What questions do you have? Does this make sense? If you think of something we missed, let us know.*

# Parent Involvement: How to improve outcomes

## Individual Education Plan (IEP)

- ▶ IEP: Does the IEP meeting address certain issues?
  - ▶ **10. My child's school carried out the current IEP as written and discussed.**
    - ▶ The district must follow the listed IEP services, accommodations, goals, Behavior Intervention Plans, etc.
    - ▶ If the district proposes changes to the IEP, the parent must be contacted for their input.
      - *Here is our data. We propose this decrease/increase/change.*
      - *What do you think? Is this okay with you?*
    - ▶ At Parent Teacher Conferences or a quarterly parent check-in:
      - *We have been doing... What are your thoughts on continuing with this plan?*

# Parent Involvement: How to improve outcomes

## Communication

- ▶ **Communication: Does the school adequately communicate with the parent?**
  - ▶ **4. My child's school makes sure that I understand the Procedural Safeguards (the rules that protect the rights of parents).**
    - ▶ Printed Version: new Parental Rights Booklets will be printed this summer.
    - ▶ Online Version: <https://doe.sd.gov/sped/documents/parentalrights/Eng.pdf> (multiple languages)
    - ▶ Explain the purpose of the Procedural Safeguards to parents.
      - *What questions do you have about your Parental Rights?*
    - ▶ Offer a printed copy or the on-line link to parents at every annual IEP meeting.
    - ▶ The first page of the IEP has a designated line for district's efforts towards distributing Parental Rights notice.

# Parent Involvement: How to improve outcomes

## Communication

- ▶ **Communication: Does the school adequately communicate with the parent?**
  - ▶ **8. My child's teachers are available to me (in person, by phone, or via email).**
    - ▶ Greet parents (respecting SPED confidentiality) at Open House, Back to School events, Parent Teacher conferences
    - ▶ At the beginning of the school year, introduce yourself to each parent via flyer, email or phone call. Explain your role and how parents can reach you. Open that line of communication!
    - ▶ Be timely and professional when responding to parents.
      - Prompt Response: *This is a good question. I need to do some checking, and I will get back to you in the next few days.*
      - Delayed Response: *Thank you for your patience with my delayed response.*
      - *If you every have questions about your child's special education program, I am always here to help. Please reach out again if you need anything further.*

# Parent Involvement: How to improve outcomes

## Communication

- ▶ **Communication: Does the school adequately communicate with the parent?**
  - ▶ **9. My child's teachers communicate regularly with me about my child's progress on annual IEP goals.**
    - ▶ At a minimum, IEP goal progress should be reported to parents quarterly via Progress Reports.
    - ▶ Send parents an e-mail or text when Progress Reports are mailed or sent home with the student.
      - *Progress Reports for your child's IEP goals were sent home today. Please reach out if you have any questions.*
    - ▶ At IEP meetings, discuss the IEP goals from previous year, what progress looked like, seek parent input on what the new IEP goals should cover.
    - ▶ At Parent Teacher Conferences, specifically discuss IEP goal progress.



# Parent Involvement: How to improve outcomes

## Communication

- ▶ **Communication: Does the school adequately communicate with the parent?**
  - ▶ **11. Information I receive about my child's special education program is written in an understandable way.**
    - ▶ Remember that parents are not special education teachers! Avoid jargon and acronyms.
    - ▶ If the parent is not understanding, the professional is likely not explaining it the right way.
    - ▶ Even if an IEP process was explained in the past, check in to ensure the parent understands. Re-explain as many times as needed. Never make a parent feel embarrassed to ask questions.
    - ▶ Give extra attention to prior written notices. Ensure all four areas are filled out thoroughly with clear, understandable language. Read it aloud and ask yourself, "Will the parent understand this?"
    - ▶ Call the parent to see if they need help reviewing information.
      - *I mailed the final copy of your student's IEP. It has a lot of information, so please let me know if anything is unclear.*
      - *I mailed a prior written notice to summarize our meeting. What questions do you have?*

# Parent Involvement: How to improve outcomes

## Information

- ▶ Information: Does the school provide information on options parents can take to help their child?
- ▶ **5. My child's school makes sure that I understand my options if I disagree with a decision of the school.**
  - ▶ Parental Rights/Procedural Safeguards: <https://doe.sd.gov/sped/documents/parentalrights/Eng.pdf>
    - If you are a SPED Director or Teacher and have not read this document...READ IT! You must ensure parental rights are followed in your IEP processes.
  - ▶ Dispute Resolution: <https://doe.sd.gov/sped/complaints.aspx>
    - IEP Facilitation, Mediation, Dispute Resolution, Due Process Hearing
  - ▶ Navigator Program: Partnership between DOE SEP and SD Parent Connection:
    - Brochure: <https://doe.sd.gov/sped/documents/NavigatorProgram.pdf>

# Parent Involvement: How to improve outcomes

## Information

- ▶ Information: Does the school provide information on options parents can take to help their child?
- ▶ **6. My child's school provides information on organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities.**
  - ▶ Do not limit families to only what YOU know and can do. Give them resources!
  - ▶ South Dakota Parent Connection: variety of resources for SD families
  - ▶ Disability Rights South Dakota: variety of resources for SD families
  - ▶ SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired or SD Services for the Deaf
  - ▶ SD Department of Social Services
    - Medicaid: may pay for pull ups for children over 3 years old with disabilities
    - Special Needs Car Seats
  - ▶ (Further resources are continued on next slide.)

# Parent Involvement: How to improve outcomes

## Information

- ▶ Information: Does the school provide information on options parents can take to help their child?
- ▶ 6. My child's school provides information on organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities. (continued...)
  - ▶ SD Department of Human Services
    - Family Support 360: service coordination and respite funds
    - Strengthening Families Program: reimburse costs of diapers and wipes
    - Respite Program: assists with respite care
    - Services for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing: Hearing Aid/Cochlear Implant assistance
    - Supplemental Security Income (SSI): low birth weight baby or extended newborn hospital-stay
    - SD Council on Developmental Disabilities: funds for training

# Parent Involvement: How to improve outcomes

## Information

- ▶ **Information: Does the school provide information on options parents can take to help their child?**
  - ▶ **7. For parents of students in grades 8 or above: I have been involved in discussion with my child's school related to post-secondary school (college, technical or other settings), employment and/or independent living, and adult service agencies.**
    - ▶ This question had the lowest score of all questions state-wide.
    - ▶ Transition is required before at 16; recommended at age 14 for students with significant cognitive disabilities.
    - ▶ When requesting consent for the transition assessment, thoroughly explain the transition process.
    - ▶ Cover all transition areas and post-secondary goals during IEP meetings.
    - ▶ Seek consent to invite outside agencies and explain why they should be invited.
    - ▶ Ask for student and parent input.
    - ▶ (Further resources are continued on the next slide...)

# Parent Involvement: How to improve outcomes

## Information

- ▶ Information: Does the school provide information on options parents can take to help their child?
- ▶ 7. For parents of students in grades 8 or above: I have been involved in discussion with my child's school related to post-secondary school (college, technical or other settings), employment and/or independent living, and adult service agencies. (continued)
  - ▶ Give students and parents transition resources:
  - ▶ SD Department of Human Services:
    - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Project Skills
    - Native American VR: on six SD reservations
    - Guardianship Establishment Program
    - Independent Living Choices
    - Western Resources for Independent Living

# Parent Involvement: How to improve outcomes

## Partnership

- ▶ **Partnership: Does the school encourage parents to be an equal partner?**
  - ▶ **1. I am treated as an equal partner with my child's teachers and other professionals in planning his/her special education program.**
  - ▶ **3. My child's school gives parents the help they may need to play an active role in their child's education.**
  - ▶ **12. Overall, I am satisfied with the extent to which teachers and other professionals encourage my involvement as a parent.**
- ▶ Everything suggested on previous slides contributes to the feeling of partnership.
  - Use open ended questions when gathering information.
  - *You are a partner in your child's education. Your input is valuable. You know your child best.*
  - Do not just say it with words...show it with actions!

# Response Rate Results: How to improve outcomes

- ▶ DOE requires that district response rate must be 10% or higher. EVERY parent should be given the opportunity to respond! Any response rate under 10% is an automatic Corrective Action Plan (CAP).
- ▶ Districts can increase response rate through a variety of methods:
  - ▶ Overall, in-person methods help the district keep track of how many surveys have been completed and will produce better response rates.
  - ▶ Explain to parents that their feedback is needed so the district can improve their IEP process. Remind parents that all answers are confidential. Only DOE can read comments.
  - ▶ At the annual IEP meeting: Have a paper survey or an I-pad/laptop available with the online survey. Ask the parents to take a few minutes prior to the meeting or a few minutes after the meeting to complete the survey. Have them seal the paper version in their envelope, and offer to mail it for them.
  - ▶ Parent Teacher conferences or any time parents are in-person: Have paper surveys or an I-pad/laptop available to complete/submit the survey.
  - ▶ Hand out or mail surveys/envelopes to the parents. Explain that their input is valuable.
  - ▶ E-mail the on-line survey link to every parent.



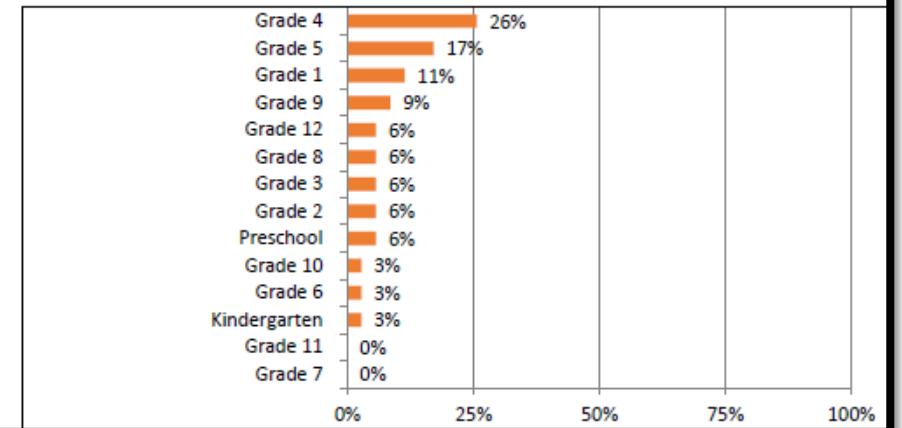
# Response Rate Results: How to improve outcomes

## Demographics

- ▶ District Reports have tables/graphs with results of response rates by **demographic group**
- ▶ If a grade level or disability category is under-represented in the district survey response rate, the district must make targeted efforts to increase that group's response rate.

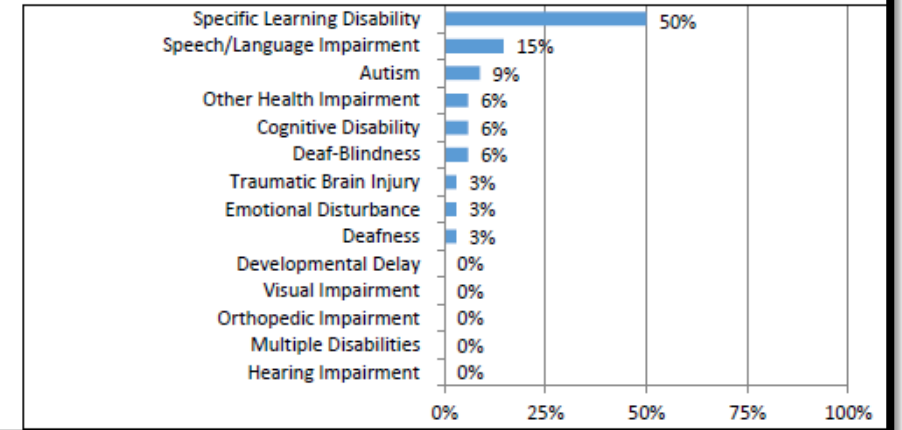
Display 11: Parent Respondents Who Had a Child in This Grade at Time of Survey

	Number	Percent
Preschool	2	6%
Kindergarten	1	3%
Grade 1	4	11%
Grade 2	2	6%
Grade 3	2	6%
Grade 4	9	26%
Grade 5	6	17%
Grade 6	1	3%
Grade 7	0	0%
Grade 8	2	6%
Grade 9	3	9%
Grade 10	1	3%
Grade 11	0	0%
Grade 12	2	6%



Display 13: Parent Respondents Who Had a Child with This Primary Disability

	Number	Percent
Autism	3	9%
Deaf-Blindness	2	6%
Deafness	1	3%
Emotional Disturbance	1	3%
Hearing Impairment	0	0%
Cognitive Disability	2	6%
Multiple Disabilities	0	0%
Orthopedic Impairment	0	0%
Other Health Impairment	2	6%
Specific Learning Disability	17	50%
Speech/Language Impairment	5	15%
Traumatic Brain Injury	1	3%
Visual Impairment	0	0%
Developmental Delay	0	0%



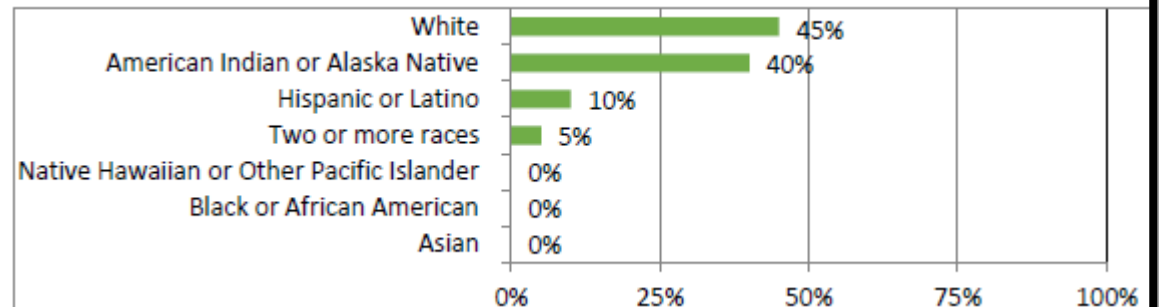
# Response Rate Results: How to improve outcomes

## Race/Ethnicity

- ▶ DOE is federally required to report if **Race/Ethnicity** is under-represented in survey response rates.
- ▶ Districts should make every attempt to ensure that parents of students in all Race/Ethnicity groups are being surveyed with a response rate that is representative of the groups in the district's special education population.
- ▶ For example, if 70% of a district's students with disabilities are American Indian, then 70% of the district survey responses should be from American Indian respondents.
- ▶ If a particular Race/Ethnic group is under-represented in response rates, the district must make targeted efforts to increase that group's response rate. DOE will monitor race/ethnicity response rates at the district level.

Display 12: Parent Respondents Who Had a Child of This Race/Ethnicity

	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaska Native	8	40%
Asian	0	0%
Black or African American	0	0%
Hispanic or Latino	2	10%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0%
White	9	45%
Two or more races	1	5%



# District Planning: How to implement

- ▶ Using these ideas, implement plans to improve outcomes in your districts!
  - ▶ SPED Directors:
    - ▶ Develop **District Policy** on survey distribution methods for SPED staff to follow.
    - ▶ **In-Services:** Present district plans/ideas at end-of-school year or beginning-of-school year to SPED staff.
    - ▶ **Staff Meetings:** Provide SPED Teachers/SLPs with information/resources to distribute. Explain expectations regarding communication, partnership, and IEP. Discuss how to increase response rate with accurate demographic representation.
    - ▶ **District Reports:** Share results with SPED Teachers/SLPs. Staff cannot change what they do not know.
  - ▶ SPED Teachers/SLPs:
    - ▶ Implement methods to communicate with, partner with, and involve parents in the IEP process.
    - ▶ Create your own **tracking system** for survey distribution/completion.

# Input Needed!

- ▶ Thank you for all your efforts in partnering with parents and serving students with disabilities in South Dakota.
- ▶ SEP is seeking feedback from district stakeholders (SPED Directors, SPED Teachers, Speech/Language Pathologists, School Psychologists) on how to improve the Indicator 8 survey process.
- ▶ Please provide input in the following form by May 26, 2023:
  - ▶ <https://forms.gle/X4t3tLymbBTgMhsm6>

# Questions?

- ▶ Here is my contact information for any questions about Parent Surveys for Indicator 8: Parent Involvement:

**Stacy Holzbauer, Alternate Assessment Specialist**  
**DOE Special Education Programs**  
[Stacy.Holzbauer@state.sd.us](mailto:Stacy.Holzbauer@state.sd.us)  
**605-295-3441**

- ▶ If you are requesting CEUs, be sure your “Name, District” is in the chat.
- ▶ I will stay on to answer any questions. Otherwise, that concludes this training. Thank you for attending.

